

Plenary 4

Breaking Down Barriers to Apprenticeships

Speaker:

Duncan Palmer, Platform Housing

Sarah Turner, City & Guilds

Clare Middleton, Ian Williams

Jen Radcliffe, PFP Thrive

Chaired by: **Tom Arey**, PFP Thrive

Room: Ballroom



NHMF
Maintenance
Conference
2026



Duncan Palmer

Head Of Operations – Platform Housing Group

NHMF - Skills & Training, Recruitment & Retention, Culture



10 Ways We Retain Our Tradespeople

STRATEGY	KEY ACTIONS
Pay & Benefits	Competitive benchmarking, retention bonuses, predictable hours & OT offer
Career Pathways	Structured routes, funded training, apprenticeships
Tools & Support	Reliable vans/tools, better systems
Leadership	Coaching skills, communication, fair workload
Team Culture	Recognition, inclusion, team identity
Reduce Friction	Better diagnostics, material availability
Wellbeing	Flexible hours, mental health support
Engagement	Forums, involvement in decisions
Customer Interaction	De-escalation training, clear policies
Data-Driven	Track trends, stay/exit interviews



Your trusted global

Skills Partner

Evolving workforces for over 145 years

NHMF Maintenance Conference 2026

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Our purpose today is the same as it has always been....

to help people, organisations
and economies develop their
skills for growth

we're *proud* of our past and
excited for our future

76%

of City & Guilds learners
progress into employment
within six months,
compared to 67% of
learners who study with
other providers

Supporting Housing Providers to Build a *Confident and Competent Workforce*

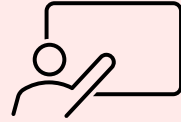
With almost 150 years experience, City & Guilds is a trusted leader in vocational education and skills development

We work with housing providers to support them in developing the right people with the right skills to meet today's regulatory demands



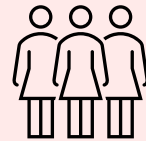
Apprenticeships

- Market leader 60+ apprenticeships
- National provider network
- Levy optimisation support



Workforce Development

- 500+ qualifications
- Learning & development consultancy
- Bespoke training
- Accreditation



Leadership

- ILM qualifications
- Bespoke solutions for all levels
- Skills workshops
- ILM Accreditation



Looking after Careers

Ian Williams Apprenticeships



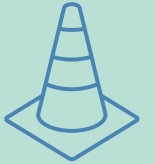
Current Climate



- 900 Trade workforce
- 121 trade apprentices 14%
- Trainee Surveyor Programme
- New Trainee Contract Manager Programme



Blockages



- Course availability
- Meeting apprenticeship requirements
- Mentor training

Clare Middleton – Lead Programme Partner
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The challenge

Skills Shortage

The UK is experiencing a shortage of skilled professionals in the Housing sector, particularly due to the rising demand for housing across the country.

Future Skills

Our sector is changing at a significant rate, we need to upskill our colleagues with the right skills to meet the future demands of our sector.

Training Quality

Training in our sector has often lacked relevance. We need industry-specific training that blends practical skills with a values-driven approach, delivered by experienced professionals.

Customer & Community Impact

Creating local opportunities in communities attracting those furthest from the job market into work. Upskilling Customers with the knowledge, skills and behaviours to Thrive.

To be the **leading**
and most **trusted**
training provider in
the housing sector

PfP Thrive – How We'll Achieve Our Mission

1. **Quality learning, shaped by our customers and the sector.**
Delivering training that meets real needs and drives measurable impact.
2. **Partnerships that last.**
Building strong, trusted relationships across the housing and construction sector to create shared success.
3. **Innovative training solutions.**
Designing forward-thinking programmes that respond to evolving skills needs and future opportunities.
4. **Thought leadership in housing sector skills.**
Influencing best practice and championing the professional growth of the sector's workforce.
5. **Safe, inclusive and personalised learning for all.**
Creating environments where every learner can thrive and reach their full potential.

PfP Thrive | In Partnership with...



Thank you.

See you at the
next conference!



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